

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
Established by the
National Capital Planning Act of 1952
7013 Interior Building
Washington 25, D.C.

December 9, 1955

Mr. Harland Bartholomew
Chairman
317 North 11th Street
St. Louis 1, Missouri

Dear Mr. Bartholomew:

Thank you for your letter of November 8, 1955, referring to the Council the proposed plan of the Central Intelligence Agency to select a portion of the land under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Public Roads for the location of its headquarters office building.

After considering all of the facts and recommendations available, the Council recommended the selection of the Langley site for the use proposed by a vote of 5 to 3 with 2 refraining from exercising their voting prerogatives. To afford an opportunity to comply with the statutory requirement "that in the case of an action involving more than one jurisdiction, the negative votes of a minority of the Council shall be made a matter of record and shown on all plans adopted," those voting in the negative were Mr. Gutheim of Upper Montgomery County and Messrs. Wells and Reichalt, both from Prince Georges County, the former sitting from the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission and the latter from the Board of County Supervisors of Prince Georges County. Voting in the affirmative were: Colonel Hunter, representing the Engineer Commissioner of the District, Mr. Brookfield from Fairfax County, Mr. Cox from Loudon County, Mr. Gingery from Montgomery County and Mr. Graham from Falls Church sitting as an alternate in the vacancy from Alexandria. The comments made at the meeting of the Council by the various members are being extracted from the transcript of record and submitted to make clear any reservations or qualifications expressed and will be submitted as soon as available.

Following the Council's action favoring the selection of the site, it adopted a resolution requesting the CIA, in the event that it does locate at Langley, to obtain authorization and appropriations from the Congress for certain specific improvements which, in the opinion of the Council, will be needed at the time the CIA headquarters is opened at Langley as follows:

"RESOLVED, That the Council request that the Central Intelligence Agency, in conjunction with its request for appropriations, ask for authorization and appropriations for the improvements not yet committed which are related to this development as described in the report of its Director:

Chain Bridge widening along with Canal Road and Weaver Place improvement; Virginia Route 123 Parkway to Chain Bridge; Glebe Road - Lee Highway to Chain Bridge; Parkway to Cabin John Bridge, including Cabin John Bridge; George Washington Memorial Parkway - Maryland side; Outer Belt - Route 7 In Virginia to U. S. 240 in Maryland."

In an effort to give the fullest and most comprehensive consideration to the problems involved in the CIA proposal, the Executive Committee of the Council instructed me to request reports giving facts and recommendations from each of the local planning agencies or governing bodies represented on the Council and to seek advice from the District Engineers, Washington District, Corps of Engineers, U. S. Army, concerning problems confronting him on the Potomac River. Accordingly, consistent with the statutory duty of the Council to "promote collaboration and cooperation between the Commission and the Planning agencies of the environs", I made a request on behalf of the Council to each of the above referred to bodies as is set forth in an attachment hereto.

As requested, the Staff Director presented a report to the Council in which he analyzed in detail the contents of the various documents received from the local groups together with other data relevant to the problem. His report, with those of the local agencies attached thereto as appendices, is submitted herewith. At the request of the Council, the Director also submitted his conclusions and recommendations regarding the feasibility of the subject site, based upon his analysis. These are contained in the record of the Council's proceedings.

In transmitting the action of the Council to the Commission for its consideration, I am taking the liberty of adding certain observations and comments which should be considered my own and not necessarily those of the Council. I believe it is particularly important for the Commission to study carefully the comments made by the several members of the Council prior to the action taken in approving the Langley site as that would appear in several cases to qualify to a considerable degree the apparent unconditional approval indicated by the numerical vote.

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I would also like to point out that certain assumptions which appear to have been made in the Clarke report with relation to the adequacies of the access and certain facilities are open to serious question. I refer to the recommendation of the Clarke report for a 6-lane section of the George Washington Memorial Parkway extending from Chain Bridge to the site whereas plans have never called for more than four.

Further, the sewage treatment plant authorized for construction by Fairfax County in the Pimmit Run Valley prior to the advent of the CIA made provision for a maximum capacity of 7,500 persons in the first stage of construction. This was presumably designed entirely for residential connections. It would appear to me that a justifiable question can be raised regarding the adequacy of this initial installation to accommodate an office establishment of 10,000 or more persons without assurance that the plant will be enlarged to accommodate this unanticipated overload.

Sincerely yours,

Max S. Wehrly
Chairman

Enc.

November 17, 1955

Mr. Keith Price
Chairman
Fairfax County Planning Commission
Fairfax County Courthouse
Fairfax, Virginia

Dear Mr. Price:

On November 4, 1955, the Chairman of the National Capital Planning Commission forwarded to the National Capital Regional Planning Council in accordance with P.L. 592, a report on the proposed location for a new headquarters at Langley for the Central Intelligence Agency upon which the Council's advice and recommendations were requested.

In order to implement the functions of the Planning Council in advising on the above mentioned report, the Executive Committee of the Council voted to request that all of the constituent jurisdictions represented on the Council who may be affected by the location of the CIA establishment be given the opportunity of reviewing the above mentioned report in terms of the effect its recommendations may have upon each jurisdiction in question. As the Langley site is within the boundaries of Fairfax County, the Executive Committee is aware that Fairfax County may be more directly affected in many of the elements involved than will other jurisdictions represented on the Council.

The Executive Committee feels that only in this way can the Council evaluate clearly the effect of the installation from the Point of view of the metropolitan area as a whole.

Accordingly, it is requested that your body, in conjunction with the governing body of your jurisdiction, review the report in some detail, giving particular attention to the accuracy of statements of fact as they may affect your jurisdiction, relative to

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major traffic arteries, the availability and adequacy of water supply, problems of sewage disposal, and timing of and responsibility for proposed projects and related factors treated in the report.

Under P. L. 592, the Planning Commission is required to report within 60 days following the presentation of any proposal such as that referred to above. As a prerequisite the Commission must obtain the Council's recommendations and that of the local planning bodies involved. In order for the Council to fulfill this requirements, it will be necessary to have your comments not later than Monday, November 28, so that this may be incorporated into a report to be presented to the Council at a special meeting to be held Monday, December 5.

While it is regretted that this time is necessarily short, it is our hope that you will be able to give us, in writing, as complete a statement on this matter as possible. All members of the Planning Council have been furnished copies of the CIA report and as the quantity is limited, your Council representative has been asked to share his copy with you.

If there are any further questions relating to this letter or the report on the CIA, it is suggested that you get in touch immediately with Mr. Paul C. Watt, Director of the National Capital Regional Planning Council.

Sincerely yours,

Max S. Wehrly
Chairman

cc: Board of Supervisors
Fairfax County Courthouse

STATEMENT OF REGIONAL COUNCIL MEMBERS
RELATING TO THE LANGLEY PROPOSAL - DECEMBER 5, 1955

Statement of JOHN GRAHAM, JR., First Principal Alternate from Falls Church, sitting for Alexandria.

I have carefully studied the various reports and other items of information relating to this subject, and also I have attended meetings with CIA representatives, both open and closed.

In my opinion the subject divides itself into two categories: One relates to matters of safety and security both local and national; the other concerns itself with planning.

The sole judge of the location of a permanent site for CIA, from the security angle, is the CIA itself. Their reasons for selection, both those made public by them and those of a confidential nature not able to be made public, determined their choice of this particular site; whether their reasons are valid or not is not debatable.

This agency represents the heart of our national security system and its requirements, whatever they may be, demand top consideration. Under present world conditions we cannot afford to short change an Agency concerned with adequate measures of national security.

CIA established particular requirements for a site. Among the advantages of the Langley site made public by the CIA are the following: The site is within a ten mile radius of and within 20 minutes by auto from the zero milestone in Washington.

Ample acreage is available, both for proposed buildings and for extensive parking space of autos for employees. The proposed site already belongs to the Federal Government, which eliminates the cost of buying private land for public use, thereby taking such land out of taxation.

The proposed location contains extensive acreage (749 acres) which means that only a minor part (140 acres) need to be used by CIA, permitting the actual project area to be centered within and well sheltered. It is a site not too removed from the present living of more than half of the employees.

It is in a more or less secluded area, not subject to ready disturbance. It is a country park-like site which tends to contribute to the health and morale of the employees. It is the preferred site from over forty other sites considered. And the building project from the architectural angle can be given a collegiate atmosphere advantageous to the area as claimed by the distinguished architect, Mr. Harrison.

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In addition to the above advantages, we were told in confidence of other advantages bearing on national safety and security which makes this site preferable to all others examined. It is not possible to expose these advantages here but the members of the Council recall the information given.

The second category of this subject concerns planning and I am thoroughly aware of its importance. I am conscious of the arguments brought up about the impact on present living in this area by implanting the CIA in this location. However the report of Clarke and Rapuano indicates that the requirements of constructing adequate access roads and bridges as well as providing necessary water, sewer, electric and telephone can be satisfied.

As far as the impact on living in the area of the proposed site is concerned, this can be viewed as an adjustment similar to those adjustments now occurring in numerous suburban areas under development around Washington where sizable projects involving thousands of houses with shopping centers are now under construction and others projected for the near future. This proposal of CIA is a matter inviting good planning rather than a situation or crisis meriting opposition.

In evaluating the two categories of this subject: 1) the CIA's preference for the Langley site and 2) the problems of planning, we must I feel, give first consideration to the factor of national safety and security. This means approving CIA's preference for this site.

Since the establishment in a neighborhood of a federal agency of CIA's size and importance from a military point of view, does make exceptionable demands on the neighborhood it is only right and fair that the federal government supply financial assistance, if needed, for the construction of adequate access roads and bridges. This type of project which directly involves national safety and security is actually not different from the construction of a vital military installation requiring the investment of federal funds as necessary.

Statement of COLONEL THOMAS B. HUNGER, Alternate for Brigadier General
Thomas A. Lane, Second Vice Chairman, National Capital Regional
Planning Commission.

We have jotted down here some of the points that we think should be considered in connection with this site at Langley.

First, we would like to point out that it violates prior planning for low density in this area.

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Number 2, it anticipates the future highway and other development which may well delay the construction and effective use of the facility.

Number 3, It creates new traffic requirements above Key Bridge which will modify bridge requirements in that area and Federal funds should be provided to meet the need.

Number 4. It will require approximately 19 percent of the employees now living in Prince Georges County and Eastern Washington to relocate their homes presumably in the Langley area in order to maintain acceptable commuting requirements.

Other employees in northern parts of Washington and Silver Spring will also be required to move, possibly migrating to the Langley area.

Number 5. However, although there are other more suitable sites which appear to be available for the project, the considerations outlined do not require prohibition on this project but rather a warning to the Agency (CIA) of the difficulties to be anticipated in its development.

The Federal Government must be prepared to supply all necessary future requirements which are not in fact supplied by the several local jurisdictions concerned as promised here.

We in the District of Columbia do not feel that the setup of the District of Columbia should be required to supply these other requirements which may be later found to be necessary.

Statement of JOHN BROOKFIELD, Member from Fairfax County.

Mr. Chairman, you have a report from the Fairfax County Planning Commission on file which I would like for you to consider as a part of my report, as I am a member of that Planning Commission, and signed my name to it. However, I do have an additional statement which I would like to make at this time.

The representatives of the Central Intelligence Agency and the report of the consulting engineers have set forth in no uncertain terms the need for a CIA headquarters and the unusual suitability of the Langley site for such an establishment. After hearing Mr. Dulles explain the reason and need, and convinced -- I am convinced that this is a case where patriotism should be placed up above profit.

It is the consensus of opinion on a large majority of citizens of Fairfax County, with whom I have discussed the subject, that the location in Langley will be of benefit to the county especially the area surrounding Langley and McLean.

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The Planning Commission approved the site. The Board of County Supervisors also, and promised to furnish the necessary sewage, lines and disposal facilities.

The City of Falls Church will provide water.

The Governor of Virginia and the Highway Department have promised to build necessary access roads and to start extension of other roads.

Congress has approved and appropriated the funds if the Langley site is chosen.

It is my considered opinion that the location of the CIA at Langley will be of immense value to Fairfax County and surrounding areas. Extension of the George Washington Memorial Parkway will give hope that it will eventually be completed. I unhesitatingly recommend approval of the Langley site.

Statement of WILLIAM J. COX, representing Loudoun County, Virginia

I think we need to keep in mind and I do not believe it has been kept in mind the separation of the problem here.

There has been a good deal of talk of low density here. It seems to me to be a rather distinct problem from the problem of whether the CIA locates in Langley or elsewhere.

The CIA's action does not of itself necessitate any increase in the population of the area surrounding Langley.

It will give pressure to the increase of the density of the population in that area in proportion to the means of access in the Langley site which are inadequate.

Nevertheless, the final control of the population density rests with the Board of Supervisors of Fairfax County.

First, there is the problem of locating the home for the CIA, and secondly, the problem of preserving the low density of that area which is your aim, I think, and a proper and desirable aim of the Planning Council.

I had said already that the pressure for an increase in the density will be in direct proportion to the lack of suitable access to the site. If access is made suitable it would seem to me that should the supervisors of Fairfax County, advised by the Planning Commission of Fairfax County, desire to retain the present character of that area, there is no particular difficulty in doing it.

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The number of people who would be forced by circumstances of access to move into that area would apparently be quite small.

However, I do feel that access as provided by present planning is not adequate and if the Langley site is adopted I feel pretty safe in making the prediction that before very long, before it has been in use very long, the persons responsible for its satisfactory operation will also have to concede that the existing means of access, including those that are definitely proposed to be in existence by the time the building is completed and put in operation, are not adequate.

Any report that this Commission makes in respect to the Langley site I think should emphasize that fact because as I recall the original proposal for the location at the Langley site the Federal Government proposed doing very little to give access.

They have since been realistic enough to recognize the George Washington Memorial Parkway would have to be built to make the proposition tenable at all. I think they should recognize, too, that to avoid an undue disturbance or at least to avoid which might be an insurmountable pressure for living conditions, they have got to add substantially to the means of access that the Federal Government has so far accepted a responsibility for.

With that preamble, I think that the reasons that have been proposed by the CIA as leading them to the conclusion that the Langley site is the one they prefer to any other site are controlling reasons and I am in favor of the use of the Langley site.

Statement of DONALD E. GINGERY, Member from Montgomery County Regional District

Mr. Chairman, I, like some of the other commissioners, believe that this site is inadequate from the transportation standpoint.

However, I also believe that other sites that have been proposed are also inadequate. I would doubt that any site or very few sites could be selected where an installation of this type will be a Utopia.

I was a strong proponent for a site in Montgomery or Prince Georges County, Greenbelt in Prince Georges, and a site the Cabin John Valley in Montgomery County for they, with existing facilities, in my opinion, would have been inadequate as Langley is inadequate, maybe not as much, but still inadequate.

However, I think that the location of the CIA site in Langley or any other similar location would have put the local state and federal officials on very substantial notice and would have forced the building of capital improvements that would have required to serve the particular site wherever it happened to be located.

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Now, at no time was I ever dubious about Langley as a site, but that it lacked certain facilities, but that lack can be corrected by the expenditure of money.

Now if Langley is to be the site for the CIA it will probably do more than any other one thing to cause the accelerated building of the inter-county belt. It, in my opinion, will do more than any other one thing to get the Virginia folks to lay out and adopt a right-of-way plan for the inter-county belt which must, of necessity, hook up with the presently authorized Jones Point bridge.

It will probably accelerate the inclusion of Federal funds for the building of the Cabin John Bridge which will be of great relief to Prince Georges and Montgomery County, travelling to and from Virginia, as well as our two counties.

I believe that the forcing of the building of the Cabin John bridge and the building of the inter-county belt will not require many of the CIA employees to relocate. As a matter of fact, I think the distribution of the employees of the CIA will be expanded over a great area in all the counties and there won't be the dislocation that you might imagine.

I honestly believe that in coming out for Langley --- and this would be the first time I have ever done it and I battled for Maryland to the bitter end --- but I honestly believe that the physical facilities necessary to make the CIA locate at Langley a competent reality will actually be done.

The pressure will be there and it is the pressure we need to get these facilities built. I think it will facilitate the building of the western leg of route 240.

I think that the building of the Cabin John Bridge will take a great load off the existing Potomac River bridges, and the building of the Cabin John Bridge which will relieve the District of Columbia of building and spending many millions of dollars to improve the presently inadequate Chain Bridge, and I might even go so far as to say that they might not have to spend so much money for the improvement of Key bridge.

Now the sewer and water facilities and other facilities of that type I think can be handled by the local jurisdiction the same as any other increase in population would be and I don't think that the CIA will give them too much trouble in that regard.

From an overall picture I think that the Langley site will do more to get the proper planning done in Virginia and Maryland and get the roads built, and therefore I am going to be in favor of Langley and I am going to stay in favor of Langley until there is some other reason shown to put it some place else.

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Statement of JOHN A. REMON, alternate for Mr. Marland Bartholomew

I am in a peculiar position. While I am representing Mr. Bartholomew I am also a member of the subcommittee of the Planning Commission which will receive the Council's report on Wednesday this week.

I really feel it would be quite improper for me to make any statement at this particular time.

I hope you will all receive that in the spirit in which it is given, but it does seem to me it would be quite improper, sitting as a member of the subcommittee, which on Wednesday will get the recommendations.

I have my own ideas, however.

Statement of FREDERICK A. GUTHEIM, First Vice Chairman, National Capital Regional Planning Commission

Like everyone else I have an opinion about this horse race, too, and, like all of you here, I have several different characters.

It seems to me that basic question that I must consider as a member of this regional Council is the overall regional problem that largely I think is one of determining the role of the Potomac River and of this stretch of the river in particular above Chain Bridge in our overall planning.

And on that analysis it doesn't seem to me that a facility like the CIA belongs there.

If the facility itself is sterilized by proper improvements of the type that Mr. Cox and Mr. Gingery have suggested so that in itself its impact is reduced and made more beneficent, then I think one must go on to a candid estimate of what the consequences of this would be in terms of regional development.

I must say that I find it difficult to believe, as Mr. Gingery does, that then the energies of the State of Virginia and other development agencies would be poured into a more rapid completion of elements of the master plan.

It seems to me they would be diverted into a whole series of ill-advised patching-up efforts to make the adjustments necessary as a result of difficulties created by the impact of the CIA.

I also feel I disagree with Mr. Cox in thinking that the failure to provide - - I am sorry, perhaps I should state it more accurately - - that to the extent that access facilities are provided the impact would be lessened.

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It appears to me more likely that as access facilities are provided the impact will be increased because the availability of the area for denser types of development using the reverse flow on the traffic facilities provided would generate pressure against which the planning authorities in this area will have to struggle rather than to create a situation that would make it relatively easier for them to carry out their existing planning proposals.

It is because of the belief that this development will in itself and because of the related pressure tend to compromise the regional plan for this area that I must oppose the use of the Langley site for the CIA.

Statement of HERBERT W. WELLS, Member from Prince Georges County Regional District

Mr. Chairman, I would like to take one minute of my five minutes to correct what might become the wrong impression by some attending this meeting with reference to pressure of calls that have been made, at least to me, and possibly by other from officials of the CIA that you mentioned in your opening statement.

I would like to assure all present that when I was called by those officials with reference to it, it was with the fullest cooperation with reference to the Clarke and Rapuano report.

I was assured that there were some discrepancies, that there were some actual reverse statements that were made in the report that might be confusing to me and perhaps to others who might read it carefully, and that they merely called with the thought in mind that if there was any question in my mind that I would like to have explained more completely or an answer given to it, to feel free to call upon that office for such an explanation.

There was no pressure that I can recall in any manner or method made. It is merely one of cooperation and I think the record should show that as far as I was concerned at least as a recipient of a telephone call that it was one of cooperation.

I was not sold and no selling job was made on the Langley site particularly. They knew and I knew that that was the matter to be discussed today.

I have been in this thing since the beginning and I have served on special committees as have most of you with reference to it.

If a representative of the CIA or Mr. Dulles can assure me that because of security reasons that it is essential and necessary that this site be located at Langley, I am patriotic enough to put it there regardless of what might happen.

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If, on the other hand, we do consider economics I think of think of the 30 sites suggested for such a facility Langley is in the lower half. There is no question about it from the standpoint of economics.

From the standpoint of planning, I cannot see how it would be hurtful to Fairfax County if such a facility was located there. I have seen such facilities in other jurisdictions in communities not unlike Langley. I don't think they have hurt the community. As a matter of fact, there will be more people who will like it, and of that I am reasonably sure.

I also think that regardless of where the CIA is located, whether it be at Langley or not, the community will grow.

I think that the estate section which is within seven and on-half miles of the Capital of the United States cannot remain an estate section. I think any large bodies of land, of necessity, will have to be in public ownership and that the individual cannot have his five or ten or twenty acres that close to the capital of the nation. People must use those lands to a greater extent than is now used in Langley.

As far as I am concerned, if Mr. White who is present here this afternoon, or Mr. Dulles can tell me that for security reasons that site must be located at Langley, then I will vote for it. If they cannot answer that question, then I am going to vote that Langley not be the site.

Statement of Herbert W. Reichelt, Member from Prince Georges County

Mr. Chairman, this, of course, has given me a great deal of concern as it has to the other members of the Council.

I feel that in the beginning a criteria was established by which to determine the site. The Langley site as now selected does not meet that criteria.

We have the consideration of transportation and accessibility.

According to the report that has been submitted by Rapuano and Clarke I feel that they have been very sketchy in determining their reasoning for the Langley site.

If and when the additional funds expended to make the Langley site accessible are made available we will only then be dealing in the first phase of the accessibility of the people who would be using the CIA, and have given no consideration to the impact of increased population that naturally must follow such a large installation.

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I feel that the land uses will be changed, that it is impossible to control it.

And with this site being determined upon, that increased population of necessity must go there and far more rapidly than it would be in the natural course of events.

I am also concerned about the additional cost in order to make this site acceptable. We are dealing in theoretic figures, but it is rather determined that it would take an increased amount in excess of 12 million to make this site accessible.

I personally feel that if the security of the nation is not at stake and it is just a matter of acquiring a location that is suitable and feasible that we do not need to select the most expensive site that anyone possibly could undertake.

I feel from a planning standpoint it does not come in accordance with the established rules that we have been trying to follow.

I am opposed to the site as selected.

Statement of Mr. Phil Hall, Alternate from Alexandria (unable to vote under Council procedures.

I am in a peculiar position. I cannot sit or vote today because of the unusual situation in Virginia, but I have listened to this whole thing and I have studied it considerably in the last two or three months, but, and forgetting any local consideration, I would like to congratulate Paul Watt on a very fine report. I think he made a fine analysis of the situation and I agree in general with his recommendations.

One thing was brought up this afternoon at the very end which I believe the Maryland member in particular should realize. I think the letter read from Mrs. Wilkins gave some evidence that the Fairfax County Board may not go along with this proposal after the first of the year.

One of the control boards' policies is that they are refusing to grant permission for construction of sewage disposal units unless the County Board in a particular area agrees with the plan. If, for some reason, the Council should go ahead with this today and recommend the Langley site and then on the first of January, or shortly thereafter, the Fairfax County Board says they are opposed to the Langley site and will not go along with the necessary plans for the extension of the Pimmit Run disposal plant, the Water Control Board is not going to go along with that plan either, and therefore the Council's action today may be wholly over-ridden by the action of the County Board.